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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT WEDNESDAY, May 24, 1933

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Subject: "Milk Soups for Low-Cost Meals." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

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More about economy menus and economy dishes this morning. Some of the best dishes for low-cost meals, especially in a family with children, are milk soups. Why? Several reasons. In the first place, these soups combine those two very necessary foods--milk and vegetables and sometimes fish and meat. Milk soups are an inexpensive, easy, and appetizing way to work in part of the daily ration of milk. Nutritionists say that your child needs a quart of milk a day and you yourself a pint, especially if you are on an economy diet. But of course you don't have to drink all that milk--not when you can make it into delicious soups and use it in cooking vegetables and in sauces, gravies, and desserts.

Fortunately, milk holds its food value, no matter how you use it in cooking. And all the various forms of milk--fresh, evaporated and dried-- have practically the same food value. Milk products like butter and cheese contain the same nutrients as the cream or the milk they came from. Not even heat has much effect on the chief food values of milk. Cooking, drying, canning, and even boiling don't change the calcium and protein values. Then two of the vitamins for which milk is important-- vitamins A and G--are heat resistant. Not much vitamin B is lost in most milk dishes, for we rarely cook milk long. As for vitamin C, milk is not a very good source of that anyway.

On the other hand, heat does make some helpful changes in milk. Pasteurizing, which you know is heating the milk to a moderate temperature, destroys the disease producing bacteria that are likely to be found in milk. Heating at high temperature, as in cooking or canning, makes milk protein form a softer curd in the stomach. This is especially important in feeding infants and invalids.

So much for the milk we put into the soup. Now about the soup. Milk soups have the food value of the milk plus the nutrients of any vegetables or meats or fish used. Recipes usually call them cream soups. But you make so-called "cream of tomato soup" from milk and tomatoes, and "cream of asparagus soup" from milk and asparagus and other cream soups from milk, grated carrots, milk and corn and so on. Then by adding such other ingredients to a cream soup as diced vegetables, meat or fish with perhaps some salt pork for seasoning, you can have a chowder, which is really a full meal in one dish.

You can make cream soup of almost any vegetable or of vegetables in combination. You can use strained vegetable juice or pulp, as in tomato, pea, potato, spinach, and bean soup. Or you can make it of chopped vegetables, as in cream of

celery soup or mushroom, corn, or asparagus soup. You can even make cream soup of raw vegetables, finely chopped. Chopped raw spinach makes an excellent and very good-looking soup. You just cook the chopped spinach right in the thickened milk and save flavor, food value, and color. You can also make a delicious soup by using grated raw potato, in the same way. In general the procedure for making cream soup of any kind is to make a thin white sauce in the double boiler and then add the vegetable juice or other ingredients and the seasoning. But cream of tomato soup requires special treatment to prevent the acid of the tomato from curdling the milk. Don't use soda because that destroys the vitamin C of the tomatoes. The trick is to thicken the hot tomato juice first. Then heat the milk almost to the boiling point. Then add the tomato gradually to the milk. Stir constantly, don't let the mixture boil and serve at once.

Now a word about seasoning. That's most important if these soups are to be favorites with the family. Generally you'll use a half-teaspoon of salt for each two cups of soup. But be sure you taste carefully as you add the salt. Onion is one of the most popular flavors for all cream of vegetable soups. You can add it in the form of juice or as chopped onion. Or you can put a thin slice of onion in the milk while it is heating and then remove it before you thicken the milk. For white cream soups like cream of celery and cream of potato, parsley is a favorite addition. Parsley gives both color and flavor. So does a bright red dash of paprika, sprinkled on top of the soup after serving. Serve cream soups piping hot in hot cups or in bowls. And along with the soup, serve crisp crackers, or croutons or thin crisp toast. Grated sharp cheese sprinkled on crackers or toast and melted in the oven gives flavor with any of these soups.

Our economy menu today is for a soup and sandwich meal--suitable either for noon or for supper at night. Cream of raw spinach soup; Toasted Bacon and lettuce sandwiches and, for dessert, Dutch apple cake. Once more: Cream of raw spinach soup; Bacon and lettuce sandwich; for dessert; Dutch apple cake.

Here's the easy recipe for that good-looking cream of spinach soup. Just 5 ingredients.

1 cup of raw ground or finely chopped spinach
1 quart of milk
2 tablespoons of flour
2 tablespoons of melted butter, and
1 teaspoon of salt.

Five simple ingredients. Once more. (REPEAT)

You can grind the spinach in a meat grinder. Place a bowl where it will catch any liquid which runs from the grinder for you will save that and add it to the spinach. Heat the milk in a double boiler and add to it the flour and fat, which have been well blended . Then add the ground spinach and the salt. Stir until thickened and cook for about 10 minutes. Serve in hot bowls at once.

Tomorrow: "Reviving Your Old Straw Hat."